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OHIO.

A SOUVENIR

BY

BERTHA MONROE RICKOFF.

READ AT THE BANQUET OF THE OHIO SOCIETY
OF NEW YORK, AT DELMONICO'S, APRIL 7, 1888.

OHIO

A

Poem for the Centennial Celebration

1888

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BY

BERTHA MONROE RICKOFF

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1888

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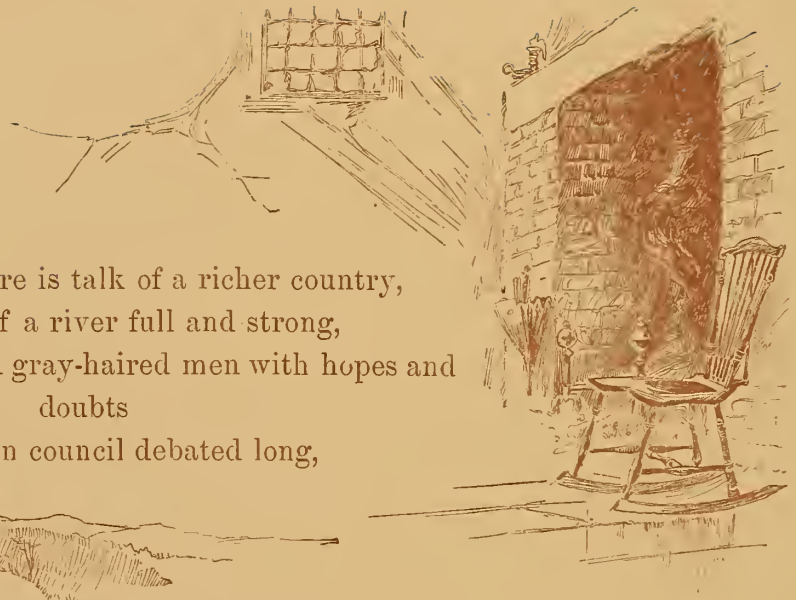
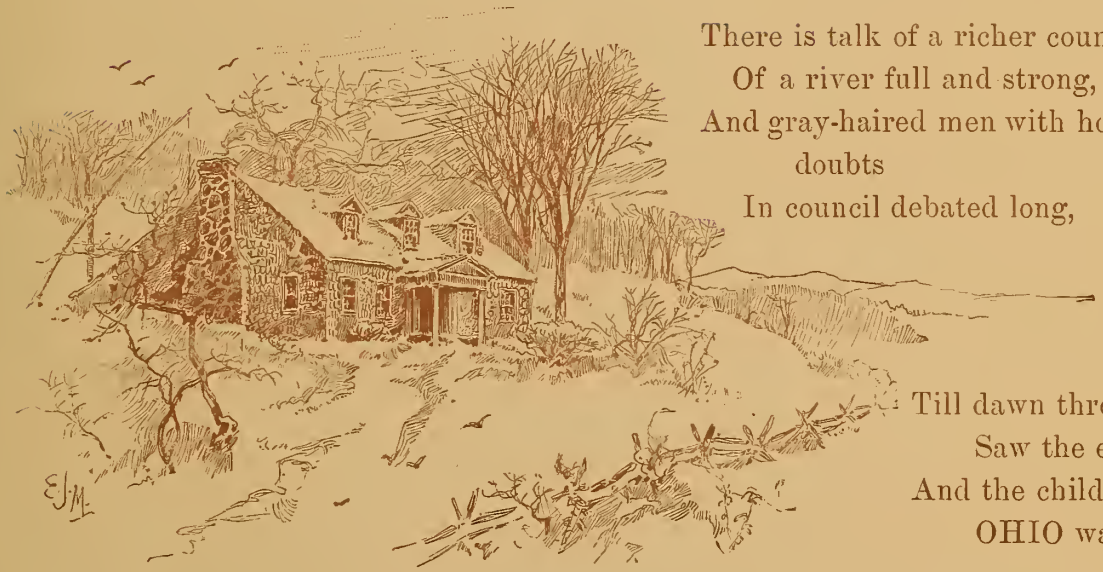
ILLUSTRATIONS

BY E. J. MEEKER.

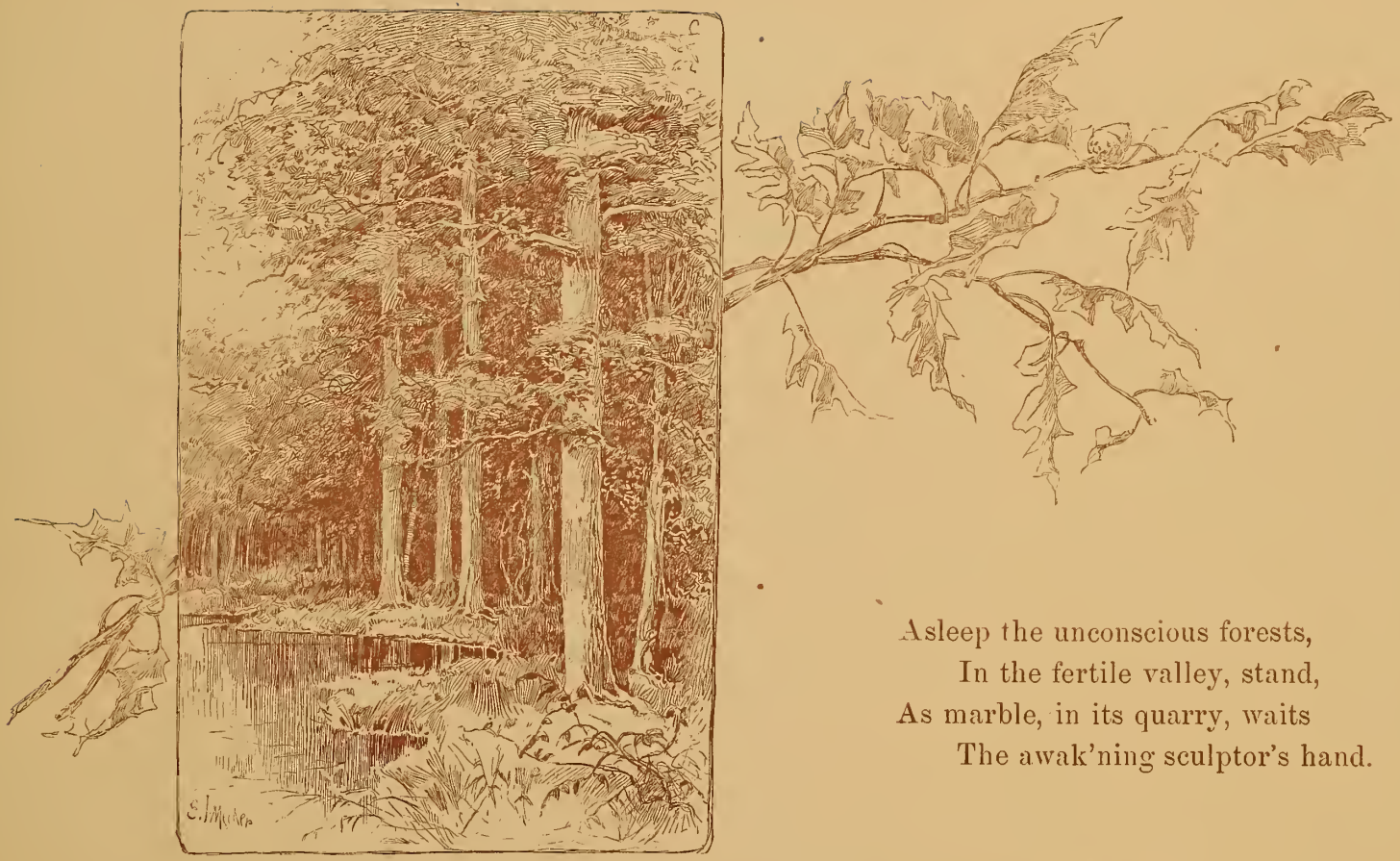
The snow in old New England
Lies deep at the farm-house door,
While the crackling logs in the chimney
Make roseate roof and floor.



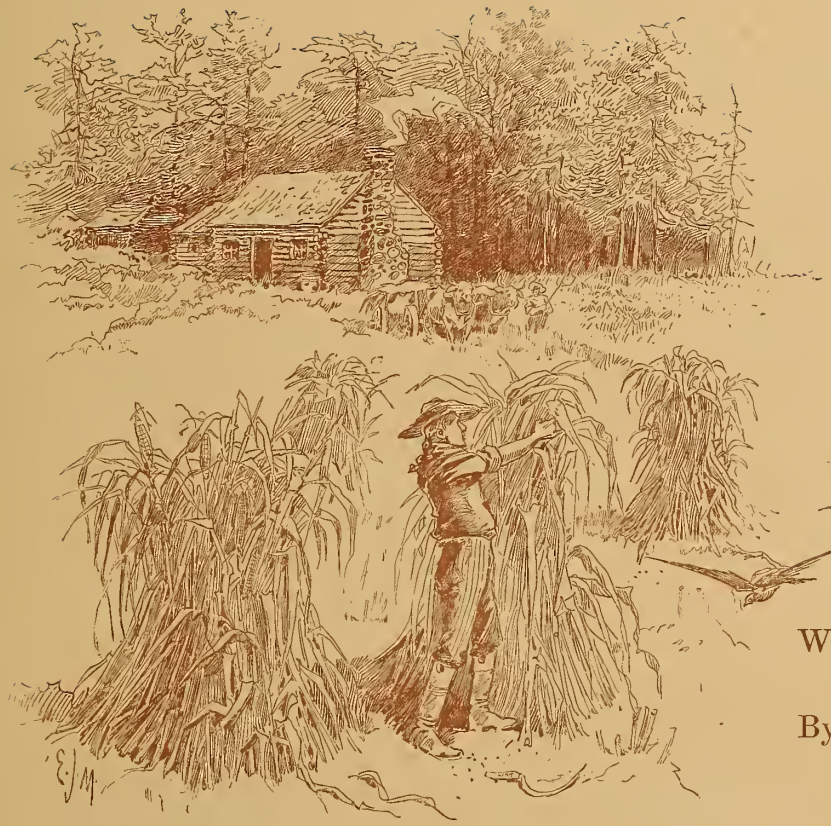


There is talk of a richer country,
Of a river full and strong,
And gray-haired men with hopes and doubts
In council debated long,

Till dawn through the square-paned windows
Saw the embers die to white,
And the child of a free republic,
OHIO was born that night.



Asleep the unconscious forests,
In the fertile valley, stand,
As marble, in its quarry, waits
The awak'ning sculptor's hand.



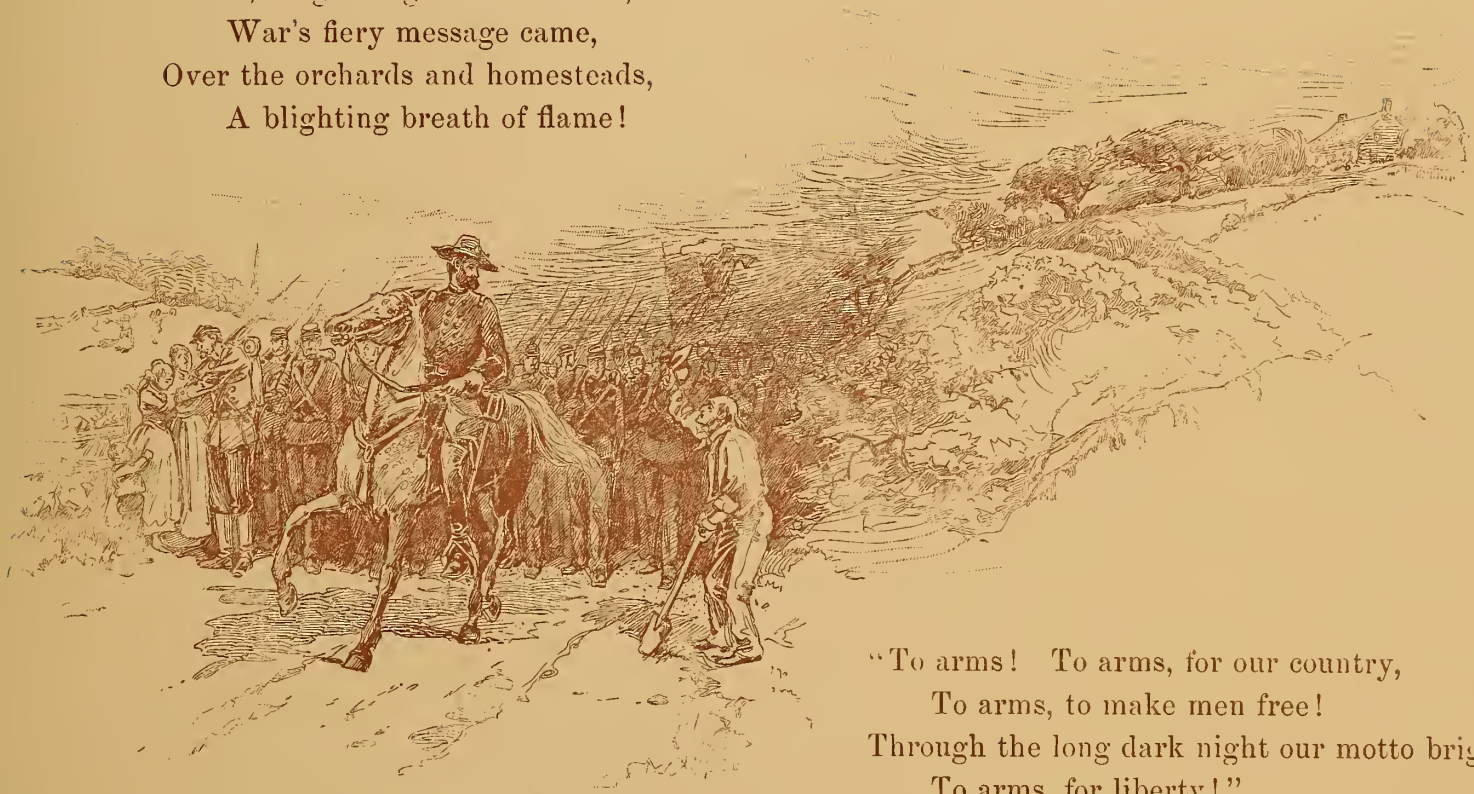
Like the dawn of a mighty era,
See the rich west world unfold,
With its fragrant fields of clover
And Indian corn's red gold!

Where the white man breaks impetuous through,
The iron pathway follows,
By purple vineyards in the sun,
By barns swept o'er by swallows.

The school house rests beneath the hill,
The rising sun's red fires
Light up the village window panes,
The cities' lifted spires!

While over the grain and the cornfields,
From the blue of the lake to the river,
Peace lies on a million hearth-stones,
Thanks rise to the mighty Giver.

When, a lightning flash in terror,
War's fiery message came,
Over the orchards and homesteads,
A blighting breath of flame!



"To arms! To arms, for our country,
To arms, to make men free!
Through the long dark night our motto bright,
To arms, for liberty!"

Again do we hear the war tramp
And see the banners play,
As when Sherman took Atlanta
And Sheridan saved the day.

Ah, thoughts of a well-known figure
Through memory tenderly float,
As we call to mind a picture
In a pale blue cavalry coat!

In the group of the world's great captains,
He stands in the foremost line;
His course to our children's children
An old romance will shine.

Be with us to-night in our feasting,
As the seeds of a cycle we plant,
Our foremost, our king and our brother,
Be with us—O spirit of Grant!

Through struggle of danger and darkness,
No tread of a slave prints our sod;
Through the fire of death and destruction
We lifted our banners to God.

The sword lies rusting in its sheath,
The battle flags are furled,
Our chiefs are called where justice rules
And council guides the world;

When again we hear the tolling bells
And the soldiers' measured tread,
As borne in state through shrouded ways
There moves a nation's dead!

From every land beneath the sky
The tributes deck his bier,
And tears from war worn statesmen fall
To do him homage here!

Oh grave in our own Ohio,
Where the northern lake wind sweeps,
We bow our heads in remembrance
Of the hill where Garfield sleeps.

The tramp of years still leads us on,
Work brings to us Midas's power,
Our lines of commerce through the world
With gold our pathways cover.

Oh rolling land of hill and lake,
With jewels on your breast,
Your palace towers, like beacons, light
The gateway to the west.

While triumph's tide on sands of time
Resistless bears us on,
We cheer—Our new found Thackeray,
Our second Keats in song.

Oh wild rose high on the sycamore tree,
Oh brown old home on the hill,
Though the world is wide and we 're on the tide,
Our hearts are with you still!

Whatever the flag that 's above us
Under the sun's broad light,
Whatever state may claim us
We 're Buckeyes for to-night!

Here 's to home, where the world was before us,
To home, with the flag floating o'er us!
In the land of the free, there 's no truer than we,
Here 's to home with the flag floating o'er us.

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